DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 026 396 TE 001 248

By-Donelson, Kenneth L.

Censorship and Arizona Schools: 1966-1968.

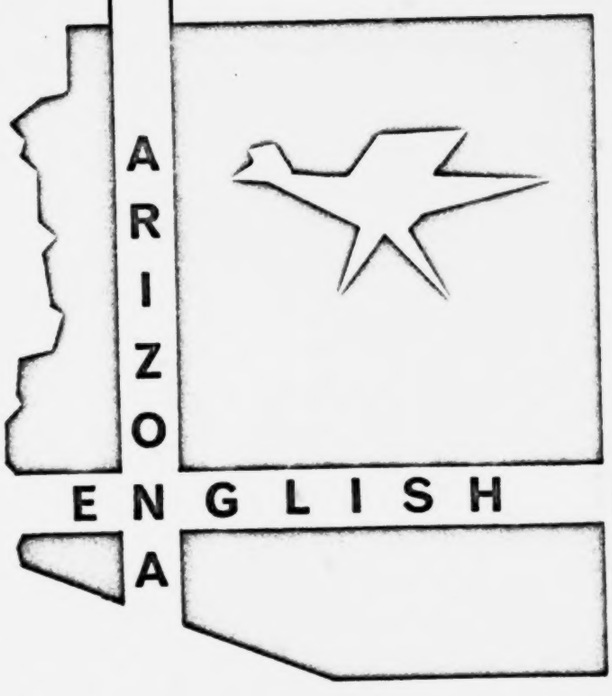
Pub Date Feb 69
Note-18p.
Journal Cit-Arizona English Bulletin; v11 n2 p28-44 Feb 1969
EDRS Price MF-$0.25 HC-$1.00
Descriptors-Booklists, *Censorship, *English Instruction, Films, Library Acquisition, Library Collections, Library Materials, Library Material Selection, Literature, Moral Issues, Periodicals, Questionnaires, School Community Relationship, *Secondary Education, *State Surveys, Surveys, *Teacher Attitudes, Teacher Education

This article reports the results of a survey of 277 secondary English teachers in 103 schools to determine the effect of censorship on English teaching in Arizona from 1966 to 1968. Listed are the numbers of teachers responding positively and negatively to each of 30 yes-or-no questions, revealing that 46.43% of the respondents had encountered censorship directly or had known of encounters among their fellow teachers. In addition to the numerical data, quotations from respondents in regard to school policies on censorship, to library book selection, and to teacher preparation for handling attempted censorship are given. Books, periodicals, films, and recordings to which there were objections are listed, together with the reasons for and the consequences of the objections. Also reported are books about which teachers anticipated objections which did not arise. Implications of the survey and recommended ways for English departments to meet censorship problems are outlined. (JS)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION

ED026396

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY.



bulletin

CENSORSHIP AND THE ENGLISH TEACHER

Volume 11 - - - Number 2

February 1969

TE001 248

CENSORSHIP AND ARIZONA SCHOOLS: 1966-1968

Kenneth L. Donelson, ASU

English teachers need periodically to reassess the effect of censorship on the state of English teaching to remind us (1) how far we have come since the last survey, (2) how far we have to go before we can truly be called a profession, and (3) how many of our fellow English teachers need our help in fighting the censor. At least six surveys about censorship have been done in the past ten years.

1959. Marjorie Fiske, BOOK SELECTION AND CENSORSHIP, Berkeley: U of California Press, a survey of censorship in California libraries.
1963. Lee Burress, "How Censorship Affects the School," Wisconsin Council of Teachers of English, SPECIAL BULLETIN No. 8, October 1963, a pioneer survey of censorship and teaching conditions in one state.
1964. John Farley, BOOK CENSORSHIP IN THE SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL LIBRARIES OF NASSUA COUNTY, NEW YORK, a doctoral dissertation at NYU.
1965. Nyla Ahrens, CENSORSHIP AND THE TEACHER OF ENGLISH: A QUESTIONNAIRE SURVEY OF A SELECTED SAMPLE OF SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS OF ENGLISH, a doctoral dissertation at Teachers College, Columbia U., a study of censorship across the country from 616 English teachers.
1966. Retha Foster, "Censorship and Arizona High Schools," ARIZONA ENGLISH BULLETIN, May 1966, the first study of censorship in Arizona.
1968. H. T. Spetnagel, "Censorship in Colorado: A Survey Report," STATEMENT: THE JOURNAL OF THE COLORADO LANGUAGE ARTS SOCIETY, October 1968.

The problem of censorship is paramount to English teachers, for they must be free to teach literature as their common sense, their moral judgment, and their professional qualification give them insight to choose, perceptiveness to teach, and alertness to relate literature to the lives of young people. In two stimulating articles in the NEW YORK TIMES BOOK REVIEW, Nat Hentoff (May 7, 1967, pp. 3, 51), author of JAZZ COUNTRY, and Susan Hinton (August 27, 1967, pp. 26-29), author of THE OUTSIDERS, argue that literature for the teenager must be literature of the real world. Both Hentoff and Miss Hinton submit that too much reading in the English classroom is a lie, or at the very least literature irrelevant to young people. Hentoff wrote, "To read most of what is written for young readers is to enter a world that has hardly anything to do with what the young talk about, dream about, worry about, feel about. It is indeed a factitious world. . ." And Miss Hinton wrote, "The teen-age years are a bad time. You're idealistic. You can see what should be. Unfortunately, you can see what is, too. You're disillusioned, but only a few take it as a personal attack. . . Why not write it realistically? (I said real, not dirty.)" Reality is all English teachers ask to be allowed to present (I said reality, not dirt). Unfortunately, some parents do not want reality for their children, and in their efforts to preserve the status quo and the teaching of "good, clean, healthy" literature, they become censors. As H. T. Spetnagel wrote in the Colorado study cited above, "The work of the censor is to ban, to forbid, and to condemn--to insulate the innocent from what he judges to be corrupt and harmful." The English teacher and the censor would do well to remember the comment of Willard Waller (in THE SOCIOLOGY OF TEACHING, 1932, reprinted by John Wiley in 1965) that "Teachers are paid agents of cultural diffusion," people hired to disseminate learning, not to confine or emasculate learning. The English teacher who timidly yields to the censor should remember another line from Waller's book, "It is part of the American credo that school teachers reproduce by budding." English teaching means contact with the real world, not protection from it by a sexless English teacher.

The following survey concerns the effect of censorship on English teaching in Arizona from 1966 to 1968. Though I believe the data are significant, I shall report the findings and let the reader draw his own conclusions. the only editorial comment will be reserved for the final section, IMPLICATIONS OF THE SURVEY. Parenthetic matter

will be added in various places to allow the reader to compare this survey with other surveys.

PROCEDURE FOR THE SURVEY: On November 12, 1968, questionnaires were sent to 277 secondary English teachers in 103 schools (94 public high schools and 9 private or parochial high schools). Small high schools were sent one questionnaire each, and larger schools were sent sufficient questionnaires to maintain a proper proportion with the smaller schools, to insure the probability of receiving at least one response from each school, and to act as a cross-check on the responses of teachers (note the section on DATA FROM THE SURVEY for some interesting responses from different individuals within the same school). With the exception of a few small schools where mobility is high, all questionnaires were sent to a name, not to "Teacher of English" or "Chairman of the English Department." Each teacher was sent a cover letter explaining the purpose of the questionnaire, a four page questionnaire (which supposedly took about 30 minutes to complete, a gross underestimate of the time needed by several respondents as they gleefully or unhappily informed me), and a stamped, self-addressed envelope. On December 11, 1968, a follow-up letter (again with a questionnaire and a stamped, self-addressed envelope) was sent to those who had not responded. On January 3, 1969, I wrapped-up the survey, compiled the data, and began the analysis of the responses. A number of questionnaires were sent to junior high school teachers; these will be the subject of a brief article in the next issue of the ARIZONA ENGLISH BULLETIN, devoted to English teaching in grades seven and eight.

The three most important items on the questionnaire were these:

Item no. 19. During the last two years, has anyone objected to or asked for the removal of any book or books which you have used or recommended to your students? (following item 19 were items asking who had made the objection, how the objection was made, what the disposition of the case was, etc.). Teachers who answered yes to item 19 will be called the DIRECT CENSORSHIP group.

Item no. 30. Do you know of any books that have been the source of objections in your school but in classes other than your own? (space followed item 30 to allow for details) Teachers answering yes to item 30 will be referred to as the INDIRECT CENSORSHIP group.

Item no. 39. In the last two years, have you used or recommended any book for which you anticipated possible objections and for which no objection arose? Teachers answering yes to item 39 will be referred to as ANTICIPATED CENSORSHIP group.

Additionally, teachers were asked to indicate their ages, major in college, years of experience, enrollment of school, tenor of the political and social climate in their city, their own political and social persuasion, whether their school had a written policy or set of procedures for handing complaints about books, their administrator's likely response to a book objection, whether the school had a closed shelf, their opinion of the climate of censorship in their school and in their community and in their state, and their recommendations for the AETA and colleges preparing English teachers with regard to censorship. The questionnaire was long; the forbearance of most English teachers was admirable. For the time and effort that went into the many respondents' answers, I am deeply grateful.

DATA FROM THE SURVEY: Much has been written, pro and con, about the value of the questionnaire as an educational tool. It is sometimes the easiest way, rather than the best way, of gathering information; the sample taken may be small or unreliable or biased (greater response is likely from those who favor or attack the point in question than from those who are apathetic); items on the questionnaire seem deceptively easy to construct (which may lead to ambiguous responses or expected responses or no responses); and the investigator must assume the truth of all responses intuitively, since he has no way of checking them empirically. With all the disadvantages and limitations of the

questionnaire, it has been widely used in other surveys of censorship, it was the only feasible approach for this study, and the length and wrath (pro and con) of many of the respondents suggested that they tried to give the facts (frequently accompanied by an oration or interpretation). Below are the data most easily given in figures:

1. Number of school sent questionnaires: 103 (94 public, 9 private or parochial)
   (Mrs. Foster sent to 96 public schools)
2. Number of schools responding: 90 (87.38%)
   (Mrs. Foster received 87 for 90%)
   Number of schools not responding: 13 (9 public, 4 private or parochial;
   (8 of the public schools not responding had enrollments less than 500)
3. Number of schools with at least one response of DIRECT or INDIRECT censorship:
   40 (44.44%)
   (Mrs. Foster reported 36 schools or 41%)
4. Number of individuals sent questionnaires: 277
   Of these 277, 24 were sent to teachers who had retired or who had moved and left no forwarding address or who returned the questionnaire with a comment that they did not wish to be involved. Hence, the number was corrected to 253.
5. Number of individuals sent questionnaires (N=253) who responded: 168 (66.40%)
   (Burress sent 724 questionnaires and received 184 or about 25%;
   Mrs. Ahrens sent 939 questionnaires and received 616;
   Spetnagel sent 600 questionnaires and received 98 or 16.33%)
6. Number of respondents (N=168) who reported DIRECTED CENSORSHIP: 33 (19.64%)
   (Burress reported 22% censorship; Mrs. Ahrens reported 78 or 12.6% censorship; Spetnagel reported 36% censorship)
7. In addition to those reporting DIRECT CENSORSHIP (N=33), number of respondents reporting no DIRECT CENSORSHIP but reporting INDIRECT CENSORSHIP: 45, or a total of 78 reporting some form of censorship in their schools (46.43%). Since questionnaires were sent to more than one teacher in large schools, every effort was made to scrutinize reports of censorship to eliminate duplicate reports. The MENTOR BOOK OF MAJOR AMERICAN POETS episode in Phoenix, for example, was reported over and over, nearly 30 times. While the case was infamous and widely cited, the case was counted only once. The same could be said for many other cases. Hence, the 78 respondents (46.43%) reporting some sort of censorship in their schools may be regarded as a reasonably accurate index of censorship in Arizona.
8. In addition to those reporting DIRECT CENSORSHIP and INDIRECT CENSORSHIP (N=78), number of respondents reporting no DIRECT CENSORSHIP and no INDIRECT CENSORSHIP but reporting ANTICIPATED CENSORSHIP: 25, or a total of 103 reporting some censorship or worry about censorship in their schools (61.31%).
9. Number of respondents reporting no censorship of any kind: 65 (38.69%)
10. Number of schools (N=90) with some written policy for handling objections to books: 27 (49 No, 11 Don't Know, 3 No Response), or 30%
    (Mrs. Ahrens reported 21.4 of her 616 schools had a policy;
    Burress reported 17% of his schools with some sort of policy;
    Mrs. Foster reported more than 25% of her schools with a policy)
11. Number of schools (N=90) reporting a closed shelf or faculty shelf: 36 (40%)
    (45 No, 6 Don't Know, 3 No Response)
12. Number of books involved in DIRECT or INDIRECT CENSORSHIP: 59
    A list of books, reasons for the objections, objectors, and results will be found at the end of this article.
    (Burress reported 80 books; Mrs. Foster reported 53 books)
13. Number of incidents of DIRECT or INDIRECT CENSORSHIP of books reported: 115
14. Number of incidents of DIRECT or INDIRECT CENSORSHIP of materials other than books: 11

15. Of the book incidents reported (N=115)
    Number of books retained: 53
    Number of incidents still in progress or outcome unsure: 19
    Number of books removed, banned, lost (?), hidden, etc.: 43
16. Of the 40 schools reporting at least one response of DIRECT or INDIRECT CENSORSHIP, number of schools in which at least one book was banned, removed, lost (?), or hidden, etc.: 20 (14 schools over 2000 enrollment; 6 smaller) (Mrs. Foster reported 21 schools with books removed, etc.)
17. Of the 40 schools reporting at least one response of DIRECT or INDIRECT CENSORSHIP, number of schools reporting at least one other response of absolutely no censorship of any kind: 14 or 35% (10 schools over 2000 pupils; 4 less)

The following summarizes data from a number of items. In several cases the reader will note that some respondents did not complete all items. As mentioned earlier, the questionnaire was long, time was fleeting, and patience sometimes ran short. The two groups referred to are the DIRECT CENSORSHIP Group, those who had been personally involved in censorship or attempted censorship incidents (N=33), and the No DIRECT CENSORSHIP Group, those who had not personally been involved in such incidents (N=135), though members of this latter group may have been part of the group called INDIRECT CENSORSHIP or ANTICIPATED CENSORSHIP. The comparison, therefore, is between those teachers who had a personal stake in an incident and those teachers who did not have such a stake.

18. Membership in the AETA (taken from membership roster, not the questionnaire)?
    DIRECT CENSORSHIP Group: Yes, 13; No, 20
    No DIRECT CENSORSHIP Group: Yes, 55; No, 80
19. Sex of the respondents?
    DIRECT CENSORSHIP Group: Male, 11; Female, 32
    No DIRECT CENSORSHIP Group: Male, 54; Female, 81
20. Undergraduate major of respondents?
    DIRECT: English, 28; Other, 5
    No DIRECT: English, 84; Other, 51
21. Highest degree held by respondents?
    DIRECT: Bachelor's, 10; Master's, 23
    No DIRECT: Bachelor's, 52; Master's, 78, Beyond Master's, 3
22. Length of time as an English teacher?
    DIRECT: 1-3 years, 8; 4-6, 6; 7-9, 4; 10-12, 6; more than 12 years, 9
    No DIRECT: 1-3 years, 24; 4-6, 23; 7-9, 18; 10-12, 17; more than 12 years, 48
23. Age of respondents?
    DIRECT: 20-30, 8; 31-40, 14; 41-50, 7; 51-60, 3; over 61, 0
    No DIRECT: 20-30, 20; 31-40, 29; 41-50, 43; 51-60, 33; over 61, 7
24. Enrollment of school?
    DIRECT: Up to 200, 0; 201-499, 1; 500-999, 2; 1000-1999, 6; over 2000, 24
    No DIRECT: Up to 200, 7; 201-499, 25; 500-999, 27; 1000-1999, 41; over 2000, 34
25. Item 13 asked respondents to indicate which word (conservative, liberal, middle-of-the-road) best described the political and social climate of their communities. Item 14 asked respondents to indicate which of these words best described the respondents' political and social persuasions. These items were compared to determine which respondents (1) described both community and themselves in the same way; (2) described themselves as more conservative than the community; or (3) described themselves as more liberal than the community.
    DIRECT: Same, 10; More conservative than city, 2; More liberal, 20
    No DIRECT: Same, 40; More conservative than city, 19; More liberal, 70

26. Does censorship represent a potentially serious problem in your school? (Several respondents commented that this, and the 2 following items, were loaded questions, impossible to answer with a simple yes or no.)
    DIRECT: Yes, 9; No, 18
    No DIRECT: Yes, 15; No, 109
27. Does censorship represent a potentially serious problem in your community?
    DIRECT: Yes, 12; No, 12
    No DIRECT: Yes, 26; No, 92
28. Does censorship represent a potentially serious problem in Arizona?
    DIRECT: Yes, 11; No, 9
    No DIRECT: Yes, 43; No, 58
29. Have you ever attended a local, state, or national meeting on censorship?
    DIRECT: Local, 2; state, 4; national, 1; have attended no meetings, 25
    No DIRECT: Local, 15; state, 12; national, 2; have attended no meetings, 97
30. Would you like to attend such a meeting?
    DIRECT: Yes, 18; No, 6; Indifferent, 2
    No DIRECT: Yes, 68; No, 38; Indifferent, 12

The following summarizes non-numerical aspects of the questionnaire. Since the purpose was to gain information about the general state of censorship or attempted censorship in Arizona from many English teachers, rather than just those who had been personally involved in a censorship incident in the past two years, the comments are lumped together, rather than separated into the two groups used in the last series of items. A quotation followed by a number indicates only that so many respondents answered in a similar manner, not that they gave the same words.

31. Does your school have a written policy or written procedure for handling complaints about books? Would you describe the policy or procedures?
    "An oral objection must be presented in writing" or "We use the 'Citizen's Request for Reconsideration of a Book."--42
    "Meet with the Board."--3
    "Follow a chain of command: teacher, then principal, etc."--3
    "A form is sent to the parent to get his objections in writing. Nothing is ever done with it, however."--2
    "We have a library grievance committee that an irate parent can go to for action."--3
    "A system committee has been set up to handle all complaints, but the Board has the final say, and it has overruled the committee."--8
    "The book must be on the district approved list. If it is, we will defend it. Otherwise, no."--4
    "The policy is unwritten, but there is an informal procedure, a parent-teacher-principal conference."--7
32. Assuming that someone would object to your administrator about a book, how would you guess that he would handle the case? (Some gave more than one response.)
    "He would request that the objection be submitted in writing."--10
    "He would handle it through the usual chain of command, teacher, principal, superintendent, School Board."--10
    "He would return the matter to the department head who would be expected to handle the matter."--9
    "He would return the matter to the teacher involved and let him take over."--19
    "He would turn it over to a committee who would meet with the objector."--5
    "He would back the teacher all the way."--21
    "He would immediately call the teacher in for a conference."--4
    "The parents would come in and give their objections. The teacher would be called in to answer the objections in the presence of both parents and the principal."--29

"He would talk to me about it, and we would decide what to do."--3

BUT NOTE THESE:

"Refuse to let us use the book or risk any controversy that would upset the applecart."--5

"His decision would be based on the pressure put on him." or "It depends upon the influence of the objector."--8

"My guess is that he would do whatever the Superintendent told him to do or anything that would take the pressure off."--3

"Have the book removed," or "Ban the book!!"--7

"Immediate panic!"--5

"He would call the teacher in and discuss the book and probably ask the teacher to assign another book," or "Ask me not to assign this book again," or "He would read the book and then call me in. If I could defend it, I might get to use it, but he would probably ask (if there were some objectionable parts) if another book with the same theme could not be substituted."--9

"I think my administrator with the utmost tact and logic would attempt to defend the teacher's position, but in any case would relegate the book to the back room in the library."--1

"I imagine he would probably back the teacher at the time, but I would not be surprised if the book in question disappeared from the booklist."--1

"I think the principal would have talked to the parent and told me what to do, one way or the other."--1

"After an investigation of both sides, the principal might agree with the parents since we have been warned by the School Board that as far as book selection is concerned, we are on shaky ground. In other words, we can not force the issue because we will not get any support."--5

AND MOST ESPECIALLY NOTE THESE:

"We have had a change in administration and I do not know how the new one would act."--5

"He would back up the teacher, I think."--1

"In any one of several ways."--1

"I imagine he would consult with the English Chairman who, I am reasonably sure, would never have read the book. She would rush to various English teachers to find out who knew the book."--1

"He might ask for a substitution of a different book in an individual case. With so many books available, there is no need to antagonize parents."--1

33. Does your library have a closed shelf or a shelf restricted to faculty or students with permission slips?

"Our librarian has very conservative views and does not purchase books which are considered questionable."--3

"No permission slips. There is a shelf of books that are sort of in 'limbo."--2

"Certain books that students have a tendency to mark up--art books, for example--are placed under the counter, but these are available to students, if they want them," or "Just for rare books."--3

"No signed slips. The librarian interrogates the students."--1

"Yes, but the books are things like CLIFF'S NOTES and MASTERPLOTS. There is nothing suspect about any of the books. They're just there for the faculty's use."--13

"Until this year, the librarian hid most of Faulkner, Zola, and others under the desk."--1

"Books have been quietly withdrawn from circulation and placed on a closed shelf."--9

"Books are placed here when the librarian is not sure, or when some patron indicates some doubt to her. The closed shelf is small and flexible."--1

"Students who use books from this shelf are amused at its existence. Their satiric way of laughing at it is to call it the 'dirty book shelf' and when requesting slips, they ask for 'dirty book slips."--2

"Some books considered too advanced for freshmen or sophomores are restricted to juniors and seniors."--5

"What places a book on that shelf is impossible to determine."--2

"A principal found out that such a shelf did exist in our school, and he asked the librarian, 'Don't you think we need to get these books back on the shelves and in circulation?' The librarian does not know in each case why a particular book is on that special shelf."--1

AND NOTE THIS:

"No, we are not allowed to have a closed shelf in our school. Books anyone objects to are immediately removed from the shelves, and nobody ever sees them again, at least not in this school."--7

34. Do you feel censorship represents a potentially serious problem in your school?

"It always does, anywhere."--10

"It could be a problem, if the students read anything. They don't, and their parents don't care, so no censorship."--11

"Yes and no. If the objection came from a single parent, no problem. If objections came from several parents or an organized group (and there are several of those we all fear), problems aplenty."--13

"Most of the teachers here are very conservative and cautious anyway so they do not object to the fact that some books are not available to students in the library."--2

"Too much is censored by the librarian."--9

"Teachers may teach what they want as long as they can justify the reading if there are any objections."--8

"Censorship could become a problem, if teachers began to deviate from the curriculum guide. I don't see this happening in the near future."--1

"The faculty fears censorship and is very careful to select only 'good' books and thereby avoid any and all problems."--17

35. Do you feel censorship represents a potentially serious problem in your community?

"The potential threat is here. Our librarians are pretty selective."--5

"Superpatriots and fundamentalists are a vocal minority at present."--17

"Not now, but since we use books which have been objected to elsewhere, we wouldn't be too surprised to see censorship come to our town."--9

"Yes, as long as these pesky commies continue to infiltrate our colleges, high schools, churches, and homes. Then the citizens stand ready to launch an all out attack on any book which will tend to lead our youth away from the True Ideals of Patriotism, Nationalism, and Imperialism. Amen!"--1

36. Do you feel censorship represents a potentially serious problem in Arizona?

"Of course. Look what happened to MAJOR AMERICAN POETS in Phoenix."--14

"Arizona wants safe books, not good books for its children."--5

"The right wingers are a danger to freedom and thought wherever they are found."--31

"The only problem I see with censorship in Arizona is its effect on teachers, not the irate groups of protestors. . . I would hate to see teachers unconsciously censor the reading material they present just to avoid censorship problems. That is the greatest danger."--4

"I have read and introduced students to books for many years. Either they do not read what I suggest, or their parents do not object to my choices. It is my candid opinion as a parent and teacher that students do not relay much information to the home unless they are in trouble."--1

"Censorship is not as serious as some educators make it seem. A number of teachers go to great pains to create a situation that is bound to stir up controversy."--4

"Any state governed by a man who feels that the roots of modern problems with young people lie with two writers of the 1920's and 1930's would make any English teacher insecure about the books he uses."--12

"Thank heavens, we have a Governor who recognizes that literature can corrupt young people. His words about those two perverted writers of the 1930's may have made many English teachers aware of the problem, and parents were certainly alerted to what some English teachers do in the name of teaching literature."--3

"I wasn't even aware that the problem was serious in Arizona." (usually followed with a "but" or "however" with an added comment to the effect that "I haven't taught in a large city school," or "I've been out of teaching for a few years," or "The parents in my area are pretty liberal," or "I haven't taught much modern literature," etc.)--12

37. What suggestions would you make to universities training English teachers about book selection practices and censorship?

"Make prospective English teachers aware of the importance of knowing the desired outcomes of the books used."--9

"I feel this is one area in teaching English that is neglected. Something should be done for prospective teachers," or "The 'Students' Right to Read' should be required reading," or "Wayne Booth's article is worth reading."--17

"Above all, teach prospective English teachers to be sensible and to realize that no book is indispensable."--4

"A teacher must be prepared to defend what he assigns, and he must be willing to lay his resignation on the table," or "There's no substitute for backbone," or "We must demand to be treated as professionals."--6

"Few teachers come prepared to teach freshmen and sophomores. They come with the 'wonderful books' they had in the last semester or seminar in college, without a real understanding of the basic immaturity of the minds of this 'sophisticated' generation."--5

"I have taught both sophomores and juniors and know well that just as hot a discussion and deep an interest can take place with the time-tested books and poems as with the new sensational ones that graphically depict the sex act or go overboard on vulgar language."--3

"Become familiar with state statutes and Supreme Court decisions."--3

"One whole course should be devoted to the philosophy of censorship and all teachers and librarians--and maybe all university students--should take the course."--1

BUT NOTE THIS:

"Tell them to present the highest and most inspiring and informative literature that utilizes our language at its best. High school is not the place for filthy language or filthy ideas."--2

38. What recommendations about book selection or censorship would you make to the Arizona English Teachers Association?

"It should make its services known and give assistance generally."--16

"The AETA should get involved in this, but it must be stronger, since fighting this sort of fight, locally and statewide, takes time, money, and legal counsel."--8

"The AETA should establish a statewide policy statement for censorship."--42

"An AETA statewide policy statement on censorship would be a waste of time," or "Such a statement would have to be too broad to apply to all areas of the state."--17

"The AETA should involve itself in local censorship problems."--4

"The AETA should not involve itself in local censorship problems."--22

"Only upon formal request should the AETA involve itself."--9
"How about AETA sanctions against a school which limits the right to read?"--3
BUT NOTE THIS:
"The less publicity about censorship, the better."--14

39. What additional comments about censorship would you like to make?

"We need teachers who are willing to progress with a great emphasis on tact! We know we can't please everyone, but dogmatic statements won't help."--2
"We need to bring parents into the problem. Their ideas and opinions would help to alert everyone to the general problem of selecting good books."--9
"In urban areas, I believe the problem of censorship is really a problem of English teachers censoring (not selecting) books before the books get placed in the library or the classroom. It is often easier to choose a 'safe' book than one that might cause controversy. Thus, many areas have no controversy because teachers select innocuous books."--6
"I believe the teacher should have a very clear understanding of his reasons for teaching any book. We have, after all, a captive audience."--2
"I think English teachers may too easily close ranks and oppose all censorship. We must be prepared to take a look at the other side of the case. Not all teachers are right; not all censors are wrong."--3
"Defense of the right to read should be a major part of our duties, but it can be provided only by unity among English teachers. We must unite on the principle that the teacher's judgment, that of a trained professional, is the only valid criterion for selection of books."--1
"Last spring, I acquainted my class with "Censorship in Arizona Schools" as published in the May 1966 ARIZONA ENGLISH BULLETIN. It was after the Spring meeting in Flagstaff, and I always report to the top students on what I have heard or learned. The students were surprised at censorship in Arizona. They didn't think people did that here! And they appreciated the information. Many of them read other articles on censorship and as a class tried to raise and meet typical parental and community objections. This 'debate' was quite spontaneous, but I think it gave them some insight into their own prejudices."--1
"If a teacher has read the questionable book or article and can discuss the reasons why a book is worth reading, then students usually accept the selections. As long as I keep an open mind on what they think is worthwhile, they tend to tolerate what I think is good reading."--1
"We must provide more good reading for ethnic groups."--12
"To the credit of young people, they will read what they want, no matter what English teachers want. That's proof that English teachers (Thank God!!) have little effect on kids."--3
"Our district has no English curriculum consultant; therefore, our English Department has done the selection of curriculum materials with no guidance or coordination with other departments. Ignorance of the issues surrounding certain works could be a serious problem one day."--3
"I have a really big beef that I have heard many librarians express. . . Why can't English teachers investigate what the library holdings are? Why can't they use their preparation periods and the time after school to see what the library has?. . . I've seen teacher lists that were 20 years old, with books mostly out of print, assigned to 150 students."--1
"We could have had many complaints, but most of our teachers, myself included, steered clear of books that might offend."--4
"Teachers can put as much pressure on an administrator as can parents. Principals, I think, would prefer angry parents to angry teachers."--1
"My experience makes me wonder whether the average English teacher reads enough to be qualified in book selection."--2
"We interview school board candidates and then work for the ones that we think have open minds and are opposed to censorship."--5

"The AETA and teachers must belong to and have the aid of interested community people, e.g., the "Right to Read Committee" in Phoenix. Only the public can exert the proper pressure for quick decisions. Professional groups can do it, but it takes such a long time."--3

NOTE THESE COMMENTS ON PUBLISHERS AND THEIR TEXTBOOKS:

"Textbook publishers go out of their way to avoid controversy."--4

"The recent furor over MAJOR AMERICAN POETS was a good thing, for it might cause publishers to select more wisely the works they choose to represent writers."--1

"There is some justification for taking the wraps off all writing for 'A' level students who want to explore and evaluate ideas that happen to be expressed in the most foul and profane language. But never ignore the effect of this same language on some average and many 'C' students. And keep in mind that publishers will fill our kids' books with garbage if we let them think it's what we want."--1

NOTE THIS IMPORTANT QUALIFICATION ON THE RIGHT TO READ:

"A parent has a right and perhaps a duty to evaluate the books his child reads. This right begins with and ends with his own child. No one parent has the right to determine what other children will read."--11

FINALLY, NOTE THESE COMMENTS:

"Our Superintendent has indirectly communicated the feeling that books should not be used which are potentially 'dangerous' in inciting parents' ire. There are too many books available to allow a controversy to develop over any one."--1

"The Board of Education knows what parents in our area want their children to read. If teachers don't feel they can teach what the parents approve, they should move on."--1

"I would not recommend any book any parent might object to."--4

"Sometimes, the more attention to censorship problems, the more the problems snowball. Being quiet about censorship is better than talking about it."--14

"We need to publish a recommended reading list across the state which will be given to school boards for approval."--4

"I have not experienced any problems with censorship, nor have I known any teachers who have."--7

(written across the top of the first page of the questionnaire as explanation for not completing it) "I do not see the value of this sort of survey. Censorship is, in my opinion, vastly overrated as a problem," or "English teachers ought to keep quiet on the subject of censorship, both locally and across the state. This sort of questionnaire and the ARIZONA ENGLISH BULLETIN you say you will publish on censorship are certain to cause trouble for teachers like me who do not need or ask for trouble."--9

"The English teacher is hired by the school board which represents the public. The public, therefore, has the right to ask any English teacher to avoid using any material repugnant to any parent or student."--1

"We haven't got a damn thing worth censoring."--3

"No censorship problems. No, nobody here would support us. When they hire English teachers in my town, they make sure that the English teachers are either cowards or pliable. Those that are cowards present no threat to anything (especially good literature or kids). Those that are pliable are brainwashed. Nobody here ever taught anything remotely worth censoring."--1

"Our librarian advises that we do not have a problem because she anticipates that if such books as CATCHER IN THE RYE were in our library, we might have a problem and she does not put them on the shelves. 'It is available in paperback; if they want to read it, let them buy it.'"--1

BOOKS OBJECTED TO, EITHER DIRECT OR INDIRECT CENSORSHIP:

Author and Title	No. of Objections and Objector	Objection	Result
Bellamy, LOOKING BACKWARD	2 parent and ?	"socialism," "communism and fascism"	1 retained, 1 removed
Bernstein, WEST SIDE STORY	2 parents	"dirty words" "sexual scenes"	2 retained
Buck, THE GOOD EARTH	1 parent	"Too sexy"	retained
Burgess, TREMOR OF INTENT	1 student	?	retained
Camus, THE STRANGER	1 parent	"sex"	retained
Chaucer, CANTERBURY TALES	2 parent and ?	"immorality" and "The Miller's and Reeve's and Franklin's Tales"	retained and ?
Clarke, THE OX BOW INCIDENT	5 2 parents, 2 ? 1 religious group	"language," "painting over bar," "obscene"	3 retained, 2 ?
Crane (ed) 50 GREAT AMERICAN SHORT STORIES	3 3 parents	"book taught 'pre-marital relations'" "language"	2 removed, 1 ?
cummings, POEMS (not "i sing of olaf:	1 ?	?	school board refused to let it be used
Ellison, INVISIBLE MAN	1 parent	"book is biased on the Negro question"	retained
Fitzgerald, THE GREAT GATSBY	1 teacher	"a better book could be found"	new book found
Frank, DIARY OF A YOUNG GIRL	3 parent, ?, religious group	"obscene and blasphemous"	2 retained, 1 ?
Gold (ed) POINT OF DEPARTURE	2 parents	"dirty words" "situations"	2 retained
Golding, LORD OF THE FLIES	2 parents	"impure"	1 retained, 1 removed
Zane Grey (his books generally)	1 teacher	"religious group objected to them"	?
Griffin, BLACK LIKE ME	3 parents	"dirty words" "filth"	1 in progress, 2 retained (one parent refused to put objections in writing when she "learned that her pastor had the title on his recommended reading list.")

Haley, A TEXAN LOOKS AT LYNDON	1	attorney for parents	"biased, inflamatory"	removed
Hawthorne, THE SCARLET LETTER	2	parents	"filthy book"	1 retained, 1 "The principal asked us not to use it rather than to risk a controversy"
Heller, CATCH-22	3	student, parent, ?	"anti-war and immoral" "protect others from reading" "language"	1 retained, 1 ?, 1 removed
Hemingway, A FAREWELL TO ARMS	3	2 parents, 1 ?	"anti-war and dirty"	1 removed, 1 hidden by librarian, 1 put on closed shelf
Hemingway, THE SUN ALSO RISES	1	parent	"obscenity"	on closed shelf
Hersey, HIROSHIMA	1	parent	"pacifist book"	?
Huxley, BRAVE NEW WORLD	9	7 parents, 1 school board member, 1 ?	"sex" "vulgar language" "filth" "dirty"	4 retained, 2 removed, 1 "lost", 1 closed shelf, 1 principal refused to let teacher use.
Jones, THE TOILET	1	teacher	"vile and filthy"	book returned to public library where it was "placed under the shelf"
Kata, A PATCH OF BLUE	2	parents, minister	"prostitution" ("We believe the real reason was prejudice against friendships among races.")	2 retained
Keyes, FLOWERS FOR ALGERNON	1	parent	"dirty, filthy book about a sex pervert"	retained
Knowles, A SEPARATE PEACE	1	parent	?	retained
Laurents, HOME OF THE BRAVE	2	parents	"profanity" "vulgar"	1 retained, 1 removed
Lawrence, INHERIT THE WIND	1	?	?	retained
Lee TO KILL A MOCKINGBIRD	4	3 parents, principal	"sex" "vulgar" "rape"	2 retained, 2 teachers not allowed to use book
Levin, ROSEMARY'S BABY	1	?	?	?
Lockridge, RAINTREE COUNTY	1	librarian	"unsuitable"	removed
McKuen, POEMS	1	parent	"dirty"	?
Melville, MOBY DICK	1	parent	"homosexual"	retained

Michener, HAWAII	3	2 parents, 1 teacher	"unsuitable"	1 ?, 1 removed, 1 put on closed shelf
Miller, THE CRUCIBLE	4	3 parents, 1 minister	"immoral and against the church" "sex" "author has leftist tendencies"	2 retained, 1 ?, 1 in progress
Miller, DEATH OF A SALESMAN	1	parent	"language"	retained
Miller, A CANTICLE FOR LEIBOWITZ	1	?	?	hidden by librarian
Norris, McTEAGUE	1	parent	"anti-Semitic"	retained
Orczy, THE SCARLET PIMPERNEL	1	parent	"stereotyped image of a Jew"	retained
Orwell, ANIMAL FARM	1	?	"socialism"	retained
Orwell, 1984	3	3 parents	"too depressing" "filth"	2 removed, 1 retained
Patton, GOOD MORNING MISS DOVE	1	parent	"obscenity" "Red propaganda" (this is likely a repeat of the incident reported in 1966)	retained
Renault, THE KING MUST DIE	2	parents and ?	"suggestive situations"	1 ?, 1 removed
Salinger, THE CATCHER IN THE RYE	15	11 parents, 4 ?	"obscene" "language" "dirty"	6 retained, 1 ?, 5 removed, 1 in progress, 2 on closed shelf
Settle, BEULAH LAND	1	school board member	?	removed
Steinbeck, EAST OF EDEN	1	parent	"obscenity"	removed
Steinbeck, GRAPES OF WRATH	3	2 parents, 1 ?	"realistic" "language"	2 retained, 1 ?
Steinbeck, PORTABLE STEINBECK	1	parents	"the Lord's name was taken in vain"	retained
Stolz, A LOVE, OR A SEASON	1	parent	"general indecency"	?
Stone, LUST FOR LIFE	2	parent and ?	"immoral"	1 temporarily withdrawn, 1 reading of book was made optional ("It was discovered that the recommending committee had never read the book.")
Tolkien, THE HOBBITT	1	parent	"subversive elements"	retained
Twain, HUCK FINN	1	parent	"Negro image"	retained
Verne, AROUND THE WORLD IN 80 DAYS	1	?	"unfavorable to Mormons"	?
Wentworth and Flexner, DICTIONARY OF AMERICAN SLANG	1	parent	?	removed (reported many times)

West, CRESS DELAHANTY	1	parent	"The cover picture of a girl undressing would cause boys to be sexually aroused."	retained
Wheeler, PEACEABLE LANE	1	parent	"unfit for school libraries"	retained
Williams and Honig, MENTOR BOOK OF MAJOR AMERICAN POETS (for the e.e. cummings' poem, "i sing of olaf")	1	parent	"immoral, anti-American, profanity, obscene"	removed (amidst much furor--this incident was reported more than 25 times
THE WORLD'S GREAT RELIGIONS	1	?	"criticized for its treatment of Christianity as another world religion"	removed the following year

MATERIALS OBJECTED TO (OTHER THAN BOOKS), EITHER DIRECT OR INDIRECT CENSORSHIP:

PERIODICALS:				
MAD MAGAZINE	1	Superintendent	"lewd, inappropriate knocking national heroes, picture of pregnant woman"	in progress
HARPER'S	1	parent	"article on slums in Puerto Rico and its language"	retained
A-V MATERIALS:				
"Of Black America" (film)	1	parents and students	"white students felt the film was unfair to whites. Negro students felt the film was unfair to Negroes."	retained
Records of Bob Dylan	2	Administrator and ?	"administration regards them as a waste of time (school very traditional)"	2 ?
Records of Beatles, "Eleanor Rigby"	1	Administrator	"Beatles' involvement with dope, and their music a waste of time and in poor taste"	teacher told to get back to teaching English
Records of Rod McKuen	2	Administrators	"Don't play dirty music" "Not a proper part of English. Get back to the work of the English class."	2 records banned
Records of Bill Cosby	1	?	?	directive sent down, "All material must be cleared with the librarian."

PLAY PRODUCTIONS:

Weiss, MARAT/SADE	1	teacher	"obscene and blasphemous"	production stopped
McLeish, JB	1	principal	?	play produced

PAPERBACK BOOKS:

One incident where a teacher was forbidden to use or stock any paperbacks. The librarian maintained that paperbacks were on their way out of the classroom, and no good English teacher would use them.

Compare the titles in the list above with the titles in the following list. These books were listed as those works which teachers had used or recommended and for which they anticipated possible objections and for which no objections arose. Comparison of the two lists may go far to reassure English teachers that good literature is taught in some schools in the state. It may also reassure a teacher who is fearful of repercussions that other teachers have taught certain "questionable" works. The number within parentheses is the number of teachers who had used a particular title.

Aristophanes, LYSISTRATA (2)
Baldwin, NOTES FROM A NATIVE SON (2), THE FIRE NEXT TIME (1)
the BIBLE (7), the "Book of Job" (2)
Beatles, RECORDINGS (4)
Brown, MANCHILD IN THE PROMISED LAND (3)
Camus, THE STRANGER (2), THE PLAGUE (1)
Capote, IN COLD BLOOD (2)
Chaucer, CANTERBURY TALES (1)
Ciardi, "On Flunking a Nice Boy out of School" (1)
Clarke, THE OX BOW INCIDENT (4)
Bob Dylan, RECORDINGS (3)
Faulkner, THREE SHORT NOVELS (1)
Flaubert, MADAME BOVARY (1)
Frame, GEORGY GIRL (1)
FRENCH SHORT STORIES (1)
Golding, LORD OF THE FLIES (9)
GREEK PLAYS (2)
Griffin, BLACK LIKE ME (4)
Hawthorne, THE SCARLET LETTER (2)
Heller, CATCH-22 (4), MILA 18 (1)
Hersey, A BELL FOR ADANO (3), HIROSHIMA (2), TOO FAR TO WALK (1)
Hughes, A HIGH WIND IN JAMAICA (1)
Huxley, BRAVE NEW WORLD (5)
Kantor, ANDERSONVILLE (2)
Keyes, FLOWERS FOR ALGERNON (1)
LaFarge, LAUGHING BOY (1)
Lee, TO KILL A MOCKINGBIRD (7)
Levin, ROSEMARY'S BABY (1), COMPULSION (1)
Malamud, THE ASSISTANT (1), THE FIXER (2)
McCarthy, THE GROUP (1)
McLuhan, WAR AND PEACE IN THE GLOBAL VILLAGE (1)
McKuen, POEMS and RECORDINGS (6)
Maugham, OF HUMAN BONDAGE (5)
Miller, THE CRUCIBLE (5), DEATH OF A SALESMAN (7)
O'Neill, DESIRE UNDER THE ELMS (3)
Orwell, ANIMAL FARM (2), 1984 (7)
Parks, A CHOICE OF WEAPONS (1)
Salinger, CATCHER IN THE RYE (24), FRANNY AND ZOOEY (2), RAISE HIGH THE ROOFBEAMS, CARPENTER (3)

Sands, MY SHADOW RUNS FAST (1)
Sartre, NO EXIT (1)
Shakespeare, MERCHANT OF VENICE (3), OTHELLO (3)
Sholokov, HARVEST ON THE DON (1)
Shute, ON THE BEACH (2)
Solzhenitsyn, ONE DAY IN THE LIFE OF IVAN DENISOVITCH (2)
Sophocles, OEDIPUS REX (4)
Steinbeck, EAST OF EDEN (2), GRAPES OF WRATH (9), IN DUBIOUS BATTLE (1), OF MICE AND MEN (6)
Styron, CONFESSIONS OF NAT TURNER (3)
Tolkien, THE HOBBITT (2)
Tolstoy, ANNA KARENINA (1)
Updike, THE CENTAUR (2), RABBIT RUN (1)
Voltaire, CANDIDE (1)
Warren, ALL THE KING'S MEN (4)
Waters, HIS EYE IS ON THE SPARROW (1)
Whitman, portions of LEAVES OF GRASS (2)
Williams, A STREETCAR NAMED DESIRED (3)
Wouk, THE CAINE MUTINY (3)
Wright, BLACK BOY (1), NATIVE SON (2)
Zola, GERMINAL (1)

IMPLICATIONS FROM THE SURVEY: As the reader reviews the comments and data above, he must remember that a teacher involved in a censorship incident is not necessarily good or right or noble. Good books can be misassigned or misused by a bad teacher, and bad books may be recommended by a good teacher for particular reasons (which may backfire). Nonetheless, with all the obvious reservations, it is clear that:

(1) censorship does exist in Arizona. We might argue that certain books on the lists earlier cited are not defensible, but the overwhelming majority are not only defensible--they must be defended by all English teachers;
(2) more schools have adopted a written policy for handling censorship, and all schools should do so;
(3) a disturbing number of teachers in schools where censorship has occurred either are ignorant of such incidents or do not know of these incidents or do not want to wash the school's dirty linen in public;
(4) although many English teachers feel that their administrators would support them if censorship hit, an appalling number clearly do not know what would happen or they fear (possibly with good reason) what would happen;
(5) a number of English teachers believe that censorship disputes would depend on the power of the censor, not the power of his argument;
(6) a number of English teachers report pressures (direct or subtle) to get rid of "dangerous" books or eliminate the teaching or recommending of any book deemed questionable by the administration;
(7) too many libraries have closed shelves with books on them for no very clear reason;
(8) English teachers are aware of the omnipresent danger of censorship, especially in the state at large, less so at home, a kind of it-can't-happen-to-me, only-the-guy-in-the-other-school syndrome. Such a feeling is dangerous, because it easily leads to apathy in working toward a written policy or defense;
(9) teachers and librarians too often serve as censors to insure that no questionable books enter the English classroom or library;
(10) THE MENTOR BOOK OF MAJOR AMERICAN POETS (for e.e. cummings' "i sing of olaf") episode in Phoenix has made many English teachers fearful of censorship in their schools; consequently, they have often become extremely cautious;
(11) too many English teachers have a gutless attitude toward censorship and their professional responsibility for selecting their books which they sometimes rationalize by arguing that a teacher should not upset community mores;

(12) many English teachers quite properly remind the profession that a parent does have the right to censor the reading of his child, but nobody else's;
(13) too many English teachers argue that publicity about censorship incidents should be quashed, that talk about censorship is dangerous for it alerts parents to dangerous books, a kind of "If we don't talk or hear about it, it will go away" syndrome. The amount of censorship revealed in this survey should make English teachers doubt that ignorance is either bliss or sensible;
(14) too many English teachers are not aware that the problem is a serious one, right here in Arizona. The problem is likely just as serious in other states, but that should not minimize the extent of the problem in our state;
(15) if the data from the survey is to be trusted, the English teacher most likely to be involved with censorship is a young teacher with an undergraduate major in English who works in a large urban high school.

RECOMMENDATIONS: The following recommendations are taken from Retha Foster's 1966 article. They still apply to all English departments.

(1) That all English departments make a determined effort to have their schools adopt an established policy for handling complaints.
(2) That English teachers participate fully as individuals and as departments in making selections for classrooms and libraries.
(3) That teachers remain constantly aware of literature both old and new that is appropriate for high school use and that in developing their programs they exercise professional judgment regarding the books needed by the students they teach.
(4) That English teachers encourage, in so far as possible, the free circulation of school library books.
(5) That English teachers both enlist and offer support of other departments in their schools, realizing that freedom to read is sometimes at stake in science, history, home economics, and other departments, as well as in their own.
(6) That English teachers enlist the support of responsible persons in the community before trouble starts.
(7) That English teachers make it plain that censorship pressures on schools will not be accepted quietly but will result in local and statewide publicity.
(8) That English departments build a file of resource materials to aid in combatting pressures. These materials should be available to all teachers and administrators of the school to provide a rationale and build a climate of opinion that will ultimately lead to freedom of inquiry and expression.